

Upcoming General Election

The next election is the General Election that takes place on Tuesday, November 2, 2010. There are many races that appear on the ballot including federal races for United States Senator , with candidates Chuck Grassley (Rep), Roxanne Conlin (Dem), and John Heiderscheid (Lib) and United States Representative for District 1, with candidates Benjamin M. Lange (Rep), Bruce Braley (Dem), Rob J. Petsche (Lib), and Jason A. Faulkner (Nominated By Petition).

The state races have also drawn attention with the race for Governor with candidates Terry Branstad (Rep), Chet Culver (Dem), Jonathan Narcisse (Ia), Eric Cooper (Lib), David Rosenfeld (SW), and Gregory James Hughes (Nominated By Petition) and more locally the race for State Representative for District 24 with candidates Michael Breitbart (Rep) and Roger Thomas (Dem).

Among the items on the ballot, there are four county offices to vote for. The Treasurer and Recorder have incumbents Linda Orr (Dem) and Sue Meyer (Rep) running, respectively. The incumbent for County Attorney, Kevin Clefisch, is not seeking reelection. Alan Heavens (Rep) and Anne Loomis (Dem) will vie for the position. There are four candidates running for two positions on the Board of Supervisors. They include Gary Bowden (Rep), Ron McCartney (Rep), Kevin L. Walsh (Dem), and incumbent Wayne Bockenstedt (Dem). Incumbent Randy Keehner is not seeking reelection.

All residents will vote on the judge retention and questions for an Iowa Constitution amendment, convention, riverboat gambling, and a \$1.4 million bond issue to renovate a building to house county offices; however, there are some items only township residents will vote on. This includes township trustees and clerks. There will also be a public measure regarding hotel and motel tax that only the residents within the city of Marquette can vote on.

Sample ballots and absentee voting will be available after September 23, 2010, but you may request an absentee ballot at any time by completing the necessary form. Absentee voting may be done by mail or in the Auditor’s Office after the ballots are ready. For a complete listing of the races and candidates, please refer to our website or stop into the Auditor’s Office. We welcome any questions that you may have.

Driveways on Secondary Roads

The public road system provides people the ability to go places and driveways provide access to the public roads. In Iowa, the County Engineer is responsible for regulating driveways along the Secondary Road System. It is important that all driveways receive a proper review. One of the most important issues is the safety of the people using the road and the people using the driveway.

People traveling along the road can have potential problems if they cannot see the driveway far enough ahead and could collide with someone using a driveway. This problem becomes even greater with agricultural equipment and semis that require more room and take longer entering and leaving the road. Also, problems occur when a misfortunate driver leaves the roadway and begins traveling down the ditch. If the driveway embankment is steep the vehicle could go airborne greatly increasing damages and injuries. A retaining wall would cause a sudden stop and be much more devastating to the misfortunate driver.

Another issue is the drainage through the ditch. If there is no culvert or it is too small water will pond along the roadway softening the roadbed and causing problems. During heavy down pours water could run across the roadway making ruts in the road.

Additionally, if the surface of the drive is dirt and the property needs to be accessed when the ground is wet there is a great potential to carry mud onto the roadway. This mud can cause a great problem for traveling motorists, especially if it is on a paved highway. Clayton County is a place that is very enjoyable for motorcyclists and mud and other debris on the highway present a hazard.

Before any new driveway is constructed on the Secondary Road System you need to contact the County Engineer’s office for a permit. We will conduct a site visit and determine if the location is suitable and determine the proper culvert size. The entire cost of the driveway including the culvert and surface material is the responsibility of the person requesting the driveway. Future maintenance expenses of the driveway are shared between the county and the property owner. If it is an issue that affects the county road the county will take care of the problem, if it is an issue that affects someone’s ability to use the driveway the property owner is responsible. Driveways that are constructed without a permit are considered illegal and the expense to remove the driveway and repair damages shall be the burden of the property owner. If you have any questions please call or e-mail our office at 563-245-1782 or cceng@alpinecom.net.



Summer/Fall 2010

Clayton County, Iowa Official Newsletter



County Contacts

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Auditor

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Board of Supervisors

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Joel Biggs
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General Relief

Jean Gage
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Health & Zoning

Janet Ott
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Recorder

Sue Meyer
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Sheriff

Mike Tschirgi
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Treasurer

Linda Orr
(563) 245-1807

Visiting Nurses

(563) 245-1145

For more information, see the contacts page on the county website.

Board of Supervisors

Opportunity has come knocking at the door of the Clayton County Supervisors. With substantial repair and maintenance costs looming at the Clayton County Office Building, the Supervisors have entered into an agreement to purchase the DeLong building on the north side of Elkader. The goal is to move all offices currently housed in the office building to the new site which will provide more useable space and accessibility for the handicapped. A feasibility study was conducted in the spring to investigate all possible options and it was decided that the purchase and renovation of the DeLong building would be the most cost-effective. Some renovation will need to be done to convert the building to office space, but it is felt that this is the best decision for the long-term needs of the County.



Summer rains have taken a toll on the County’s secondary roads. Damage is estimated in the \$500,000.00 range and the Secondary Roads department is working to repair the damage before winter.

Also a victim of repeated flooding is the bottomland between the former Elkader Sale Barn and the wastewater treatment plant. After several floods and costly cleanup, the County has entered into an agreement with the U.S. Department of Agriculture to grant a permanent easement on this property. The ground will no longer be available for tillage and it is expected that it will be used as green space of some form possibly with native grasses and a walking trail. Plans are still being developed by the USDA pending funding by the U.S. government.

Treasurer’s Tidbits

Driver License — On April 19, 2010, a new system was implemented in the Drivers License department that provides more personal security for customer’s identity. Customers leave the driver’s license station with their existing driver license (DL) or identification (ID) card and a temporary paper permit or ID card good for 30 days. If an individual does not have an existing DL or ID card, they will leave with only the temporary card. The actual plastic DL or ID featuring a new look is mailed in an unmarked envelope to the applicant and typically arrives within two weeks.

Central issuance only affects the way DL and ID cards are manufactured. It does not affect the application process or any requirements for obtaining a DL or ID card, such as proof of age and identity or required testing. The central issuance system will reduce driver’s license fraud and identity theft. It will help enhance overall safety by providing time to allow for security checks before the DL or ID card is issued. It protects the process and materials used to make DL and ID cards from being stolen or accessed by persons not authorized to produce a DL or ID card. For more information, please visit their website: iowadot.gov/centralissuance.

Titling of Motor Vehicles — Every time a motor vehicle is transferred from one person’s name to another or if a name is added or dropped, an *Application for Certificate of Title and/or Registration* form must be completed and signed by the person(s) whose name the vehicle will be titled in. These forms can be found at the Treasurer’s Office, at car dealerships, or on the internet at iowataxandtags.gov or iowadot.gov.

Treasurer’s Office staff members want to provide the most efficient and convenient service to customers but must also abide by the laws enacted by the State of Iowa. Time can be saved and frustration avoided by contacting the motor vehicle department at (563) 245-1807 with any questions that pertain to motor vehicle business prior to coming to the office.

Important Dates — Some important dates that residents should note include: September 30 & March 31 — Deadlines to pay property taxes without penalty Driver License Renewal — 30 days prior to birthday to 60 days after birthday Motor Vehicle Renewal — Month prior, month of registration and month after

Additional Links For County Resources and Information

Official Site of Clayton County, Iowa	www.claytoncountyiowa.gov
Clayton County Assessor	www.beacon.schneidercorp.com
Clayton County Conservation	www.claytoncountycorvation.org
Clayton County Sheriff	www.claytoncountyiowasheriff.com
Clayton County Recorder	www.iowalandrecords.org
Clayton County Treasurer	www.iowataxandtags.gov

Please Send Questions or Comments

Jennifer Garms, Deputy Auditor
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jmgarms@claytoncountyiowa.gov

**36th Annual
Osborne
Heritage Days**

Saturday &
Sunday

October 9 & 10

10am - 4pm
Each Day

Osborne Pioneer
Village



Go back in time to the community of Osborne to catch a glimpse of the pioneer era. Enjoy exhibits, demonstrations, pioneer church service, food and much more.



For the schedule of events, visit the Clayton County Conservation website or contact their office at (563) 245-1516.



Conservation Events

The Clayton County Conservation Board has planned many items for the public to enjoy. They include:

- September 18 — Osborne 5K Fun Run/Walk: Starting at 9:00 AM run or walk trails at Osborne, crossing the Volga River. Plan on getting wet and muddy! Alternate routes are available for those not wanting to cross the river. Participants will receive a t-shirt. Registration information is on the Conservation website.
- November 14 — Holiday Wreaths
- December 2 — Holiday Walk
- December 10 — Natural Ornaments
- January 14 — Owl Prowl



“Rediscover Northeast Iowa Treasures” with the OWLS. (Older, Wiser, Livelier, Souls) program. If you are looking for an excuse to get out of the house, make some new friends, or enjoy a meal while exploring the area, come join the OWLS. Each program is \$1.00 with optional lunch for \$6.00. Reservations are required for the following:

- September 16 — Lock and Dam #10
- October 21 — White Pine Hollow State Preserve
- November 16 — Effigy Mounds National Monument

Don't forget you may also visit many other parks, rivers, or attractions on your own. The Osborne Center is open daily to provide you with quality outdoor recreation and environmental education. It is open 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM Monday through Saturday and 12:00 PM to 4:00 PM on Sunday.

For more information, registration, or making reservations, please contact the Clayton County Conservation Board at (563) 245-1516 or visit their website at www.claytoncountyconservation.org.



Recorder's Reminders

The Recorder's Office provides many services as a repository for public records including land transactions and documenting title to property. We also pride registration and titling services for those who own recreational vehicles such as boats, snowmobiles, ATV's & ORV's. We also file and maintain the county's birth, death and marriage records, and provide certified copies of these documents. Other duties include issuing marriage licenses and assist in completing and mailing applications for passports.

We have recently had an update of the DNR electronic licensing system. ELSI2 is up and running. We will be using this system to issue all hunting and fishing licenses, including deer tags, which go on sale beginning August 15, 2010. We will be renewing snowmobiles, ATV's & ORV's through the new system beginning September 1, 2010, a reminder that these registrations all expire December 31, 2010.

We have recently implemented a program called “Property Fraud Alert”. We all know what identity theft is, but do you know what property fraud is? When someone illegally uses your property for financial gain. According to the FBI property and mortgage fraud are two of the fastest growing white-collar crimes. Through our service provider, we have created a notification service called Property Fraud Alert. Subscribe free of charge at www.propertyfraudalert.com/claytonia. You may also contact our office Monday through Friday, 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM at (563) 245-2710.



Inmate Trustee Program

The Clayton County Sheriff's Office has implemented a trustee program for the inmates. This program is for sentenced inmates who we believe do not pose a risk to the public and are not an escape risk. These inmates are allowed to do supervised work for us like yard work and washing squad cars. We do take them out in the field to preferably help cities, or non-profit organizations and communities with big projects they are doing, where they could use a little more help. Most recently we had a couple of female inmates at the Pikes Peak radio tower painting the shed. When they were done, they also helped out at Pikes Peak Park for a while. Last year we did a few projects also for different communities. The incentive for the inmates is they receive minimum wage for working, however, they don't actually receive cash.



The money they earn is applied to their room and board fees. We also most recently signed them up for the "Adopt a highway" program. We selected an area near our office and Elkader along Highway 13. In the spring and the fall they will be out there picking up trash. If you have a project you are doing and could use a little help, please give Sheriff Mike Tschirgi a call at the office and he will see what we can do. It depends on if there are dependable inmates and what the numbers are, which varies from time to time.



Assessor's Office

After a busy 2009 assessment year, the 2010 assessment year was quiet with basic new construction and deconstruction value changes. We have seen a decrease in the number of new houses constructed per year since 2007. The number of sales in the county has slightly declined in 2008-2009, but is picking back up here in 2010 with the help of first time home owners programs and lower interest rates. The sales have held steady with no decreases in value like some of the larger metropolitan areas and with no increase like our county saw in the 2003-2007 period.

Although we have had very little change in value this last year, we have had a lot of change in personnel within the office. Larry Hauser had retired on December 31, 2009 after 30 years at Clayton County. Andy Loan who has been the Deputy Assessor was appointed to the Assessor position effective January 1, 2010. The office also welcomed Darren Matthew as the new field appraiser in July. Darren and Andy will both be out in the county and communities working on new construction and revaluation projects.

2011 is a revaluation year. A big project coming up for us is the conversion to a new cost manual. Approximately every 10 years the state updates the cost manual, which is what we use at the county level to value all structures from decks to industrial warehouses. We are also starting to look into combining some of the agricultural parcels in the county. For example, two 40 acre parcels could be combined into one 80 acre parcel. This project is just starting and may take years to complete the entire county.

Just a reminder to all home owners, the homestead credit is available for those that own the land, and live on the property for the majority of the year. Only one homestead credit is available per property owner. The application can be easily filed at our office.

For property information online, look at our website at www.beacon.schneidercorp.com

If you have any questions, contact our office at 563-245-2533, or e-mail Andy at aloan@claytoncountyia.net.



Recent Flooding

The Secondary Roads department has been busy this summer with some recent flooding. The pictures below, illustrating 390th St and Emblem Rd, are some of the roads that suffered damage from floods occurring on July 23, 2010. Other damaged roads also need repairing.



Website Change

The Clayton County website is changing. The address of www.claytoncountyia.net can still be accessed, but we encourage users to utilize the new address:

www.claytoncountyia.gov

There are multiple reasons for the change. One reason is to have county wide uniformity. County offices will be switching e-mail addresses to end in claytoncountyia.gov in the near future.

Another reason is that the new website will appear more official to online searchers.

Courthouse Closed

(Sept 2010 to Sept 2011)

Labor Day

September 6

Veterans Day

November 11

Thanksgiving

November 25 & 26

Christmas

December 23 & 24

New Years Day

December 31

President's Day

February 21

Good Friday

April 22

Memorial Day

May 30

Independence Day

July 4

Labor Day

September 5

Courthouse Hours



Treasurer

M-F 8:30 – 4:00

**Assessor/
Auditor/Recorder**

M-F 8:00 – 4:30

**Board of
Supervisors**

M 9:00 – 12:00

W 9:00 – 4:00

Clerk of Court

MWF 8:00 – 4:30

T & Th 8:00 – 2:30